

Lesley Malone Childminding Service

Child Minding

Bathgate

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
3 October 2025

Service provided by:
Lesley Malone

Service provider number:
SP2011983019

Service no:
CS2011303574

About the service

Lesley Malone provides a childminding service from her detached property in a residential area of Bathgate. The childminder is registered to provide a care service for a maximum of seven children up to 16 years of age. Numbers are inclusive of the childminder's family.

The service is close to local amenities, school and park. The children are cared for downstairs and use the open plan kitchen and living area and have access to a downstairs toilet. Children also have access to an enclosed garden to the rear of the property.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 30 September 2025, between 11:00 and 13:00. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed one minded child
- received feedback from four families
- spoke with the childminder
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

As part of our inspections, we assess core assurances. Core assurances are checks we make to ensure children are safe, the physical environment is well maintained and that a service is operating legally. At the time of this inspection, no improvements were identified relating to core assurances.

Key messages

- Children experienced kind and caring interactions from the childminder, who used a calm and reassuring tone when speaking to them.
- The childminder was responsive to children's non-verbal cues which supported their care play and learning.
- There were good opportunities for early numeracy, literacy, and language development within the service.
- The childminder knew children and their families well, which created a warm and welcoming environment.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

Leadership	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

Leadership 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Leadership and management of staff and resources

The childminder had aims and objectives in place which reflected their ethos and approach to care. These had been reviewed annually, supporting a consistent understanding of the service's purpose. We suggested to the childminder ways in which the aims and objective could be further developed to include vision and values of the service and involving children and families meaningfully in shaping these. We signposted the childminder to 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' document to support the development of this.

The childminder created a warm and welcoming environment where children felt safe, loved, and secure. They regularly spoke with families and used settling in and annual questionnaires to gather feedback about the service. Parents had the chance to share their thoughts, and responses showed that they were very happy with the care their children received. All families who responded to our questionnaire, strongly agreed with the statement, 'My child and I are involved in a meaningful way to help develop the service' One parent commented, 'Lesley has always asked for verbal feedback with occasional written questionnaires however we have always been delighted with her service offered as it has always met my [child's] needs'. To make the feedback even more useful in the future, the childminder could review questions to focus more closely on specific areas they want to improve. This would help ensure that any changes made are based on what matters most to children and families and are purposeful, supporting targeted improvements.

The childminder showed consideration toward improvement through reflection. Self-evaluation had been completed, which helped them to identify what they were doing well, and aspects were requiring further development. The reflective process contributed to the development of an action plan that noted some areas for improvement. We suggested to the childminder to review the new framework; 'A quality improvement framework for the early learning and childcare sectors: childminding' to support the progress and development of their service.

Children play and learn 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the setting's work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Playing, learning and developing

The minded child was observed to be happy and enjoying their time with the childminder. They had a variety of opportunities which met their developmental needs, interests, and curiosities. These experiences offered the child play and learning which included exploring, being creative, and problem solving. As a result, the child was engaged in their play.

Play and learning was child led. We saw that the minded child was able to choose from a range of toys and resources and were engaged in their chosen play activities. The childminder was playful in her interactions and there was lots of chatter and laughter. She took time to listen to the minded child and picked up on their nonverbal cues. Her enabling attitude supported the child to explore and shape their play. These sensitive interactions reflected a good understanding of the child and supported their emotional wellbeing and engagement.

There were good opportunities observed for early numeracy, literacy, and language development within the service. Books were readily available, and the child approached the childminder to read a story, supporting early literacy experiences. Jigsaws were accessible, which promoted problem-solving and fine motor skill development. Parents told us, 'Lesley provides my [child] with amazing learning opportunities (learn through play), fantastic outings which teach them safety' and 'The activities on offer are always tailored to meet the children in her care'. The childminder's interactions were observed to effectively support language development. Strategies such as repeating single words, offering commentary, and modelling language were used appropriately to effectively support the child.

The childminder demonstrated an understanding of schematic play. Learning around schemas had been undertaken, and appropriate opportunities were provided to support this type of play. We discussed ways in which this could support the childminder to plan for purposeful play to support children's interests and development.

Regular observations enabled the childminder to effectively identify children's next steps in learning, supporting ongoing tracking of progress and development. To further enhance this approach, we discussed the value of documenting how both spontaneous and planned activities could be used to support these next steps. Recording this within individual children's folders would provide clearer evidence of how planning is directly contributing to children's learning outcomes. Children's learning and progress was regularly shared with parents, who commented, 'Development plan is always available for me, and I also get detailed information at the handover time.'

Children are supported to achieve 4 - Good

We evaluated this quality indicator as good, where there were important strengths within the settings' work and some aspects which could benefit from improvement.

Nurturing care and support

The childminder was observed to be kind and caring in her interactions with the minded child present. She engaged at the child's level, using a calm and reassuring tone when speaking to them promoting mutual respect and building a positive relationship. The childminder was responsive to their non-verbal cues. For example, recognising when they were tired and needed comfort. These moments were also used to promote language development through gentle commentary and conversation.

The childminder had carefully considered children's transition into the service. They were flexible to children's needs and ensured they had time to become familiar with the childminder and build a trusting, supportive relationship. This helped children to settle at their own pace and supported families to feel confident and reassured during this important time. One parent commented, 'Lesley is very caring person, and I know I can trust her with my [child]'.

The childminder worked in partnership with families to support children's routines, interests, and development. They listened to family views and used this information to tailor care and learning experiences. As a result, children experienced consistency between home and the setting, which supported their emotional wellbeing and sense of security. Personal plans were in place and contained important information regarding children's healthcare needs, likes, dislikes and routines. Plans were discussed and had been reviewed with families. We asked that the childminder completed reviews at least six monthly, in line with current legislation. This would ensure the childminder had information that reflected children's current needs.

The childminder had developed positive and trusting relationships with families. They knew children and their families well, which created a warm and welcoming environment. Regular communication took place through informal daily updates and sharing of photographs and messages, which helped families feel involved in their child's experiences. This contributed to families feeling valued and reassured that their child was safe, happy, and well cared for. Parents comments included, 'Lesley is an additional part of our family to my [child] they have always been made to feel welcome and comfortable within her home', 'My [child] feels safe with their childminder and that gives me peace of mind' and 'She is professional, flexible and very approachable, I can go to work with 100% peace of mind that my child will be well looked after'.

To further strengthen relationships and promote transparency, the childminder should consider offering more opportunities for parents to enter the home at key points of the day such as at drop off and pick up time. This would support a deeper sense of partnership. We signposted the childminder to "Me, My Family and My Childcare Setting" guidance to support them.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

Leadership	4 - Good
Leadership and management of staff and resources	4 - Good
Children play and learn	4 - Good
Playing, learning and developing	4 - Good
Children are supported to achieve	4 - Good
Nurturing care and support	4 - Good

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